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TAGS: PARM PREL KCFE OSCE RS XG

SUBJECT: OCE/FSC: BITE THE BULLET--SAFERWORLD REPORTS ON
SALW DIVERSION

¶11. (SBU) Summary. At the February 18, 2009 Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC), two representatives from Saferworld provided an overview of a February 2009 report on preventing diversion of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). The report notes the work accomplished by international organizations like the OSCE, but recommends additional emphasis on assessing the risk of SALW diversion, tracing shipments of SALW known to be diverted, and expand programs for managing stockpiles of SALW non-military stocks.

¶12. (SBU) In Working Group A, Switzerland offered two minor edits to the Food for Thought paper on postponing the deadline for submission of Code of Conduct questionnaire. The revised document will be released as a Chairman's draft decision and discussed at the next WG A, which will be held immediately prior to the February 25 FSC. End summary.

Biting the Bullet

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¶13. (SBU) The FSC met on February 18, 2009 at 0930 in advance prior to the joint FSC-PC meeting featuring Russian DFM Grushko's presentation on Russia's European Security initiative. The FSC meeting featured presentations by Ms. Elizabeth Kirkham and Mr. Bernardo Mariani from the NGO Saferworld, which showcased a February 2009 report from the joint project "Biting the Bullet" entitled, "Preventing Diversion of Small Arms and Light Weapons: Issues and Priorities for Strengthening Controls.". Kirkham led off with a brief overview of the report's findings, including the need for states to conduct comprehensive assessments on the risk of SALW diversions when making licensing decisions; the need to improve existing instruments for tracing diverted

shipments; and the need for better stockpile management. Kirkham noted OSCE work; specifically commanding last year's FSC decision on preventing destabilizing transfers of SALW by air as significant and encouraging development. Kirkham concluded that efforts to address small arms diversion should be integrated with wider efforts to implement all aspects of the UN Program of Action on SALW and associated regional and multilateral agreements.

¶4. (SBU) Mariani followed up by outlining concrete steps the FSC could take to combat and prevent the diversion of SALW. Mariani saw considerable scope for launching discussions in the OSCE for pre-licensing risk assessment, development of a risk assessment check list, and exploring avenues of cooperation among participating States and others. He said the OSCE could support the International Marking and Tracing Instrument (ITI) and urged the OSCE states to provide enhanced reports to the UN under ITI, including information on tracing requests made and received. Furthermore, Mariani called for the OSCE to extend its focus on stockpiles management from military stores to other authorized stocks, such as those of police and border guards. Finally, he said that all these efforts could be wrapped up into one Best Practice Guide (BPG) on preventing diversion of SALW, which would include existing BPGs, fill in gaps were necessary, and a systematic template for diversion risk assessment.

¶5. (SBU) Finland (Kangasta) and Germany (Kantorczyk) as well as the Head of the Group of Friends on SALW (Schweizer--Germany) and FSC Coordinator for SALW Projects

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(Hartnell--UK) intervened in general support of the presentations. Schweizer noted that the report followed closely with the work conducted by the FSC, and asked whether the speakers saw a need to move from current formats of BPGs to more normative documents. Hartnell used the opportunity to request donors for the SALW project in Belarus.

ASRC Dates

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¶6. (SBU) Following the presentation, the French Chair (Simonet) noted that a draft letter from the FSC to the CPC agreeing to the dates of the next Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC), 23-24 June, 2009 is currently under silence. Participating States have until February 20, 2009 at 6:00 PM to comment on the letter.

Extension of Deadline for CoC Questionnaire Submission

¶7. (SBU) In an abbreviated Working Group A, pS discussed the German-Austrian FFT extending the deadline for pS to submit their responses to the Code of Conduct questionnaire. Switzerland proposed two minor to the preamble and expressed support for the decision as long as all pS intend to use the updated questionnaire for their 2009 submissions. Russia (Ulyanov) said that Russia would support the decision, but since one pS had already submitted its information for 2009 and others were already working on their submissions based on the current questionnaire, pS must consider 2009 a "transition year"--that is, pS should have the option of using either the old or new questionnaire when preparing their submissions. Germany (Schweizer) said he would take all comments into consideration and provide the Chair with a new draft for distribution next week as a Chairman's draft. Ulyanov also reported that he anticipated that Moscow would provide him with their edits for the updated questionnaire next week. He noted that most of the recommended changes would be technical in nature and would not change the document's character. The Chair announced that WG A will meet on February 25 at 9:45 am with the intent of adopting the revised decision on extending the CoC submission deadline.

SCOTT